

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 26, 2023

Troy A. Miller  
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Commissioner  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW,  
Washington, DC 20229

**Re: Staffing Shortages Causing Excessive Backups, Long Waits at Northern Border**

Dear Mr. Miller:

We write you today as Chairs of the Northern Border Caucus to implore Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Department of Homeland Security to address staffing and resource shortages at our Northern Border. The current management of our Northern Border from CBP is unacceptable and meaningfully detrimental to Northern Border communities, visitors, and CBP employees.

First, inspection booths at Northern Border Ports of Entry are woefully understaffed. At the Peace Bridge in Buffalo, New York, the second-busiest U.S.-Canada border crossing, we have received reports of only two out of 12 regular inspection lanes being open. The lack of staff and open lanes has led to hour-plus delays during morning commute hours. At the border crossing between Champlain, New York and St. Bernard de Lacolle, Quebec, wait times have tripled on average, and some days, waits can be over two hours long. Traffic has only reached 85 percent of pre-pandemic levels yet our booths are still understaffed. Long waits dissuade travelers from crossing the border, stifle economic activity, and cause undue harm to our border communities.

In addition, Customs and Border Protection Officers on the Northern Border have been “temporarily” deployed on duty assignments outside of their assigned locations along the Northern Border. These temporary duty assignments are currently impacting 34 CBP Officers from the Buffalo Field Office, impairing the ability of our constituents to cross the border quickly and painlessly to and from Canada. CBP officers stationed at the Northern Border are frustrated with these personnel actions that take them away from their assigned post and their family. Not only does this routine practice contribute to staffing shortages, but the frequency of such assignments also impacts CBP recruitment shortfalls and poor employee morale. Lastly, NEXUS backlogs create unreasonable wait times for interview appointments, often exceeding a year. A functional NEXUS program would facilitate smoother cross-border travel.

Excessive delays for travelers cannot continue as we are in the busy summer travel season. CBP must always properly staff our Northern Border ports of entry in order to ensure border crossings

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are as seamless as possible for both our constituents and our Canadian neighbors to the North. We strongly urge that you maintain requisite resources at the Northern Border to allow for its proper functioning.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Brian Higgins in blue ink.

Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Elise Stefanik in blue ink.

Elise Stefanik  
Member of Congress